

Chairman Powell: I recall in the President's most recent State of the Union address he emphasized specifically how important small businesses are to stimulate our economy and create jobs, especially with the prospect of war looming. Why then would the government make it more difficult for a small business that consumers depend on for lower prices to keep providing that service? We use this service to pay bills and plan weekend trips etc., activity that further stimulates the economy. The LECs operate an "essential facility", and should have to accommodate other ISP firms that wish to purchase access from them. This wholesale provisioning stimulates competition and benefits consumers. Sure, if they LEC's were granted the right not to share, the government could offer help for small businesses to set up their own lines, but why not put that kind of help, which would most definitely have to come in the form of monetary subsidies somewhere else, like educational programs -- so as to further stimulate the economy by producing a more educated workforce. Please do not sell out to BIG BUSINESS, at the expense of competition and the small businesses of our country.